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OPINION

From seasonal slump to spring renewal: Beating seasonal struggles in recovery

JON BAER | INSIGHT INTO RECOVERY

March 17, 2025 . 1:00 PM — 3 min read

The move from winter to spring can have lingering effects on everyone, especially those in recovery.
COURTESY PHOTO

As winter fades and spring approaches, the shift in seasons brings the promise of renewal and fresh starts. Yet, for many in recovery, th

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lingering effects of the colder months can make it difficult to embrace this transition.

The tail end of winter often carries a sense of fatigue, isolation, and the residual weight of the holiday season. However, just as nature begins to awaken, we, too, have the opportunity to revitalize our personal journeys.

Understanding the late-winter slump

March may hint at warmer days ahead, but the emotional and physical toll of the darker months can linger. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) affects many individuals, bringing low energy, feelings of sadness, and a desire to withdraw. For those in recovery, these challenges can be even more pronounced, making it crucial to recognize the need for proactive self-care.

The post-holiday slump can also be difficult to navigate. The excitement of the holidays has passed, financial stress may linger, and motivation can wane. Combined with the unpredictability of early spring weather, it's no surprise that many feel stuck in a seasonal slump. The key to overcoming this is finding ways to re-engage with recovery and community.

Movement, routine, and connection

One of the most effective ways to combat seasonal struggles is through movement. Exercise, whether it's a brisk walk around Winchester's beautiful parks or a yoga session at home, can boost mood and energy levels. Even small steps — like stretching in the morning or taking the stairs instead of the elevator — can make a difference.

Establishing or reinforcing a daily routine also plays a vital role in maintaining emotional stability. A structured schedule provides normalcy and direction, which is especially helpful when motivation dips.

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Simple habits like waking up at the same time each day, setting aside time for reflection, and engaging in activities that bring joy can help create a sense of purpose.

Connection is another essential pillar of recovery, particularly during the last stretch of winter. Isolation can be tempting, but reaching out to supportive friends, attending meetings, or even chatting with a barista at a favorite coffee shop can help shift energy and perspective.

Winchester has a variety of community spaces that offer warm, welcoming environments for those looking to stay engaged.

Local resources for connection and renewal

Winchester is home to many opportunities for connection and renewal. Consider checking out local support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or SMART Recovery meetings, which provide ongoing encouragement and accountability. Insight Recovery also offers resources and group sessions that can help navigate seasonal struggles.

For those looking to socialize in a low-pressure setting, visiting a cozy coffee shop like Bagels N Brew, attending a community event at the Jenks Community Center, or joining a fitness class at FreddyLive Fitness can be great ways to stay engaged.

Many local organizations host book clubs, art classes, and wellness workshops that foster both creativity and connection.

Additionally, the arrival of spring means outdoor opportunities are on the horizon. Planning a visit to the Tri-Community Greenway or taking part in a volunteer cleanup event can help lift spirits and reinforce a commitment to wellness.

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Setting spring wellness goals

A new season provides an excellent opportunity to set fresh intentions. Spring wellness goals can be small but impactful, helping to maintain momentum in recovery. Some ideas include:

● Daily outdoor time: Even 10-15 minutes in the fresh air can boost mood and clarity.

● Gratitude journaling: Writing down three things each day fosters a positive mindset.

● Trying a new hobby: Engaging in something creative or challenging can bring a renewed sense of purpose.

● Mindfulness practices: Whether through meditation, breathing exercises, or mindful walks, grounding techniques can help maintain focus and emotional balance.

Spring is a reminder that change is possible, and with small, intentional steps, we can embrace the season of renewal with strength and optimism.

Seek professional guidance

If you or a loved one need support in your recovery journey, Insight Recovery is here to help. Reach out to us and explore the resources available to you.

Visit us at www.insightrecoverytc.com to learn more about our programs and community support options. You don’t have to navigate this season alone — let’s move forward together.

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Jon Baer is co-founder and business manager of Insight Recovery Treatment Center in Winchester.

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OPINION

Salvation Army thanks Winchester for Red Kettle Campaign support

To the Editor: As we begin 2026, The Salvation Army Massachusetts Division would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the residents, businesses, and volunteers in the Winchester area who supported the 2025 Red Kettle Campaign. Your generosity and kindness during the holiday season brought comfort, hope, and tangible support

February 10, 2026

OPINION

Yes, Virginia...There is a Santa Claus

Editor's Note: Francis P. Church's editorial, "Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus" first appeared in The New York Sun in 1897, and was reprinted annually until 1949 when the paper went out of business. When it first appeared, it was an immediate sensation, and became one of

December 25, 2025

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OPINION

‘Lights of Love’ in Winchester looking for donations this holiday season

Dear friends and supporters: My husband and I founded the “Lights of Love” – Winchester in 2004. For more than two decades, the “Lights of Love” has illuminated our Town Center and downtown area all year round – a glowing tribute in memory of our deceased children, family members and friends whose

December 9, 2025

OPINION

The return of the winter paunch is nothing to worry about — Just ask any squirrel

Over the past couple of weeks there’s been a familiar seasonal sighting around our Dublin house. The object in question usually appears when I’m stepping into the shower or getting ready for bed, and it’s a 100% reliable sign that summer and autumn have ended and colder

STEVE CORONELLA | FOR WHAT IT’S WORTH

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Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

March 4, 2026

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

March 4, 2026

EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

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